

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 03701 01 OF 02 080333 Z

14

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

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USIA-12 OMB-01 AID-20 ACDA-19 IO-12 GAC-01 RSR-01

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R 071048 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9109

INFO GUQVLK/ AMEMBASSY KABUL 3164

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 3701

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR PK IN

SUBJECT: PAK/ IRANIAN RELATIONS ON EVE OF BHUTTO VISIT

SUMMARY: ON EVE OF BHUTTO VISIT TO IRAN, PAK- IRANIAN RELATIONS REMAIN CLOSE AND GOP CONTINUES ATTACH HIGHEST IMPORTANCE TO SHAH' S FRIENDSHIP. PAKS HAVE, HOWEVER, INDICATED RECENTLY SOME CONCERN OVER IRANIAN ENDORSEMENT BREZHNEV COLLECTIVE SECURITY CONCEPT AND OVER SHAH' S COMMENTS RE PAKISTAN AS REPORTED IN SULZBERGER INTERVIEW. IN ADDITION OT DISCUSSING FOREGOING IN TEHRAN, BHUTTO MAY ALSO OFFER HELP IN IMPROVING IRAN- IRAQ RELATIONS. IMPRESSION HERE IS THAT SHAH NOT PARTICULARLY WELL ATTUNED TO DEVELOPMENTS IN PAKISTAN. END SUMMARY

1. WITH BHUTTO SCHEDULED DEPART FOR IRAN MAY 10,
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 03701 01 OF 02 080333 Z

CURRENT STATE OF PAK- IRANIAN RELATIONS MAY BE SUMMARIZED AS VERY GOOD OVERALL BUT WITH A FEW WEAK SPOTS AND SOME SIGNS OF FAULTY COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS DESPITE CONSTANT FLOW OF OFFICIALS AND DELEGATIONS. VISIT SHOULD BE USEFUL IN RECTIFYING LETTER.

2. BHUTTO CONFIRMED THIS GENERALLY FAVORABLE PICTURE OF PAK- IRANIAN RELATIONS DURING INFORMAL MEETING WITH US IN EARLY MAY. OVERALL RELATIONS, HE

SAID, WERE " EXCELLENT". OBSERVING THAT PAKISTAN HAD NO FORMAL BILATERAL SECURITY AGREEMENTS OR UNDERSTANDINGS WITH IRAN, SECRET OR OTHERWISE, PRESIDENT COMMENTED THAT RELATIONS WERE SO CLOSE AND IDENTITY OF INTERESTS SO BROAD THAT FORMAL AGREEMENTS SEEMED UNNECESSARY. PRESIDENT RECALLED THAT FORMER PRESIDENT YAHYA HAD HAD ORAL UNDERSTANDING OF SOME SORT WITH SHAH PRIOR TO 1971 WAR BUT THAT IT HAD PROVED " INOPERABLE". INSTEAD OF FORMAL AGREEMENTS, HE SAID, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS NOW MAINTAINED THEIR " SPECIAL" RELATIONSHIP THROUGH FREQUENT VISITS BY OFFICIALS, CONSULTATIONS AND EXCHANGES OF DELEGATIONS.

3. SEVERAL SOURCES OF GOP CONCERN OVER IRANIAN POLICIES HAVE, HOWEVER, BEEN APPARENT RECENTLY. ONE PARTICULAR POINT OF CONCERN HAS BEEN IRANIAN ENDORSEMENT IN MARCH 18 IRANIAN- SOVIET JOINT COMMUNIQUE OF PRINCIPLE OF BREZHNEV COLLECTIVE SECURITY PROPOSAL. GOP OFFICIALS HAVE REFERRED TO THIS ENDORSEMENT ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS IN THEIR TALKS WITH US, EXPRESSING UNCERTAINTY AS TO WHAT IRANIANS MEANT BY IT. CLARIFICATION APPARENTLY HAS BEEN SOUGHT AND RECEIVED FROM TEHRAN, BUT PAKS OBVIOUSLY HAVE NOT FOUND IT FULLY SATISFYING. BHUTTO BROUGHT UP TOPIC HIMSELF DURING RECENT INFORMAL MEETING WITH US. IRAN, PRESIDENT COMMENTED, WAS STRONG AND WEALTHY COUNTRY WHICH MIGHT BE ABLE TO APPROVE BREZHNEV PROPOSAL IN PRINCIPLE WHILE OPPOSING IT " IN DETAIL". AS FOR PAKISTAN, HOWEVER, THEY DO NOT ACCEPT IT IN PRINCIPLE". PRESIDENT ASSERTED FIRMLY.

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 03701 01 OF 02 080333 Z

4. ANOTHER ITEM THAT HAS CAUSED SOME CONCERN HERE WAS SHAH' S APRIL INTERVIEW WITH SULZBERGER AS REPORTED IN NEW YORK TIMES, IN WHICH SHAH WAS QUOTED AS EXPRESSING FEAR THAT PAKISTAN WAS ON VERGE OF DISSOLUTION AND SAYING THAT HE HAD URGED INDIA TO HELP GOP CONTROL AUTONOMY MOVEMENTS IN FRONTIER AND BALUCHISTAN.

SUBJECT HAS COME UP IN SEVERAL RECENT TALKS WITH PAK OFFICIALS. BHUTTO HIMSELF REFERRED TO INTERVIEW IN RECENT MEETING WITH US, EXPRESSING MILD IRRITATION OVER SHAH' S REPORTED COMMENTS. IT SEEMED TO HIM, BHUTTO SAID WRYLY, THAT " SHAH SEES HIMSELF AS THE PRO-TECTOR OF PAKISTAN - OR A CO- PROTECTOR WITH INDIA".

5. BHUTTO' S SOMEWHAT CRITICAL COMMENTS ON SULZBERGER ARTICLE HAVE NOT BEEN ECHOED IN ANY PUBLIC STATEMENTS BY PRO- GOVERNMENT FIGURES OR IN GOVERNMENT- CONTROLLED INFO MEDIA. OPPOSITION LEADERS, HOWEVER, HAVE PUBLICLY COMPLAINED ABOUT SHAH' S QUOTED REMARK TO SULZBERGER THAT IRAN WOULD TAKE " PROTECTIVE REACTION" IN BALUCHISTAN SHOULD PAKISTAN DISINTEGRATE, CHARGING HIM WITH DELIBERATE INTERFERENCE IN PAKISTAN' S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS. AT CONCLUSION ITS TWO- DAY MEETING IN QUETTA MAY 4, CENTRAL WORKING COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL AWAMI PARTY ADOPTED RESOLUTION DEMANDING THAT " STRONG PROTEST" BE LODGED WITH IRAN OVER SHAH' S REPORTED REMARK AND THAT " SUITABLE STEPS" BE TAKEN TO SAFEGUARD PAKISTAN' S INTEGRITY. GOVERNMENT- CONTROLLED PRESS, WHICH CUSTOMARILY TAKES UNDEVIATING PRO- IRAN LINE, HAS ROUNDLY CASTIGATED OPPOSITION FOR ATTEMPTING TO DAMAGE PAK- IRANIAN TIES.

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 03701 02 OF 02 080355 Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 3701

6. ANOTHER TOPIC LIKELY TO COME UP DURING BHUTTO VISIT IS THAT OF IRAN' S RELATIONS WITH IRAQ. PRESIDENTLY RECENTLY OBSERVED TO US THAT PAKISTAN' S REALTIONS WITH IRAQ HAD JUST BEEN PATCHED UP (DURING VISIT BY IRAQI EDUCATION MINISTER) AFTER PERIOD OF COOLNESS FOLLOWING FEBRUARY 10 DISCOVERY OF ARMS IN IRAQI CHANCERY. HE SPECULATED BRIEFLY THAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP IN IMPROVING CHRONICALLY TENSE RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ, IMPLYING THAT HE MIGHT EXPLORE TOPIC WHILE IN TEHRAN. IN LIGHT SHAH' S RECENT COMMENTS RE GOP LETTING IRAQIS OFF " CHEAPLY" OVER ARMS SMUGGLING (TEHRAN 2915), APPEARS THAT BHUTTO MAY FIND SELF ON DEFENSIVE IF TOPIC ARRISES.

7. COMMENT: BHUTTO' S SOMEWHAT CRITICAL REMARKS RE MARCH 18 IRAN- SOV COMMUNIQUE AND SULZBERGER ARTICLE SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN TO SUGGEST ANY SERIOUS STRAINS IN CURRENT
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 03701 02 OF 02 080355 Z

PAK - IRANIAN RELATIONS, WHICH ARE FIRMLY BASED IN BOTH CAPITALS ON PERCEPTIONS OF OWN SELF- INTEREST. THEY DO, HOWEVER, REFLECT SOME PUZZLEMENT WITH SHAH' S CURRENT POSTURE VIS- A- VIS SOVIETS AND WITH HIS PORTRAYAL OF PAKISTAN AS ON VERGE OF DISSOLUTION. WE HAVE IMPRESSION THAT, DESPITE LARGE AND GROWING IRANIAN MISSION HERE PLUS CONSTANT FLOW OF DELEGATIONS BACK AND FORTH, SHAH IS NOT ESPECIALLY WELL- INFORMED OF CURRENT PICTURE IN PAKISTAN. PART OF THIS MAY STEM FROM INADEQUACIES OF IRANIAN DIPLOMATIC AND INTELLIGENCE REPORTING FROM HERE. AND IN PART, IT MAY REFLECT LESS THAN FULL UNDERSTANDING ON SHAH' S PART THAT BHUTTO IS OPERATING IN RELATIVELY OPEN POLITICAL CLIMATE, WITH OPPOSITION PERMITTED DEGREE OF SELF- ASSERTION NOT CUSTOMARY IN IRAN.

8. SHAH MAY ALSO NOT FULLY REALIZE EXTENT TO WHICH HIS RECENT COMMENTS ON PAKISTAN TEND TO SOUND PATRONIZING TO PAKISTANI EARS. BHUTTO IS A REALIST IN CONDUCT OF FOREIGN POLICY AND HE RECOGNIZES THAT IRAN ENJOYS DEGREE OF STABILITY AND AFFLUENCE UNMATCHED SO FAR IN PAKISTAN. AT SAME TIME -- AS SOME OF HIS FOREGOING REMARKS INDICATE -- HE TOO MAY BRIDLE AT WHAT HE PERCEIVES TO BE HINT OF PATERNALISM IN SHAH' S ATTITUDE TOWARD PAKISTAN.
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